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Cover: addressed to Mr Harold Aubrey Hall / c/o W S Hall Esqre / Cossack / North West Australia

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Sarah Bracher to H A Hall, September 1894

Woodside

Golden Sgre

Bendigo

Sepr 1894

My dear Nephew

I must ask you to forgive me in being so long before I answered your interesting letter, I assure you it has been often in my mind but illness & other interruptions came in the way. I was very pleased to hear from you & I hope it will not be long before I am gladdened with another. I hope you are getting on in your business & that it may prosper well, I was glad to see your dear Pa & yourself are in the Council it proves that you each have the goodwill of your neighbours I have carefully read over your letter again & can tell you my dear Nephew that what my ever dear sister Letitia said is quite correct also what Eva said about a book getting burnt it was the narrow long book that was destroyed a great Aunt of our Grandfathers was married to one Lord Hastings her maiden name I think was Lucy Hall. I am glad you feel an interest in our old family pedigree for I do myself our forefathers derived in England with or about the time of W^m the Conqueror & had several fine grants of Land & other property settled on them Churches for instance your grand father's grand father, the Revd Tho^s Strong Hall was a fox hunter a common pastime for clergyman in those old dark days he was also a bosom friend of the Duke or York of that time & was led into many sins & extravagances by the debauched royal duke I am sorry to say that our family though they had many good traits in their character were continually selling one nice property after another until the beautiful Shackerstone & Newton Burgolands estates were only left to my father by his Uncle when my dear father was only six or seven years old. The family vault in Shackerston Church contains many of our ancestors for ages past & I have a dear lovely little sister Theodosia interred there, I well remember her as we used to walk about the garden together and the little pet used to hook her finger into mine

she was next before your Pa in our family. I was very young but I well remember the circumstance of the Marquis of Hastings sending for my father (of course your Grandfather) to meet him at his town residence Mayfair, London he asked him to breakfast & then told him that he was appointed as Governor of Malta & he found that the Shackerstone Estate would revert to the Hastings family in case my father should die without male issue at this time your Uncle Henry was very delicate through a terrible fright which I will tell you about another time if you like to hear all about it. I think your Pa was only 3 weeks old when the Marquis was so kind as to give the reversion of the property to the daughters of your grandfather in case of the sons dying in infancy. I used to hear my dear mother talking of the good old Marquis & as we were all four to be christened at the same time at St Mary's Lambeth London for we were all born near there, they thought the least they could do would be to call the eldest son Hastings. And as Dr John Hall married one of Shakespeare's daughters they named your dear father after the Poet. I have just discovered that I commenced a second sheet before I had finished the first but it was through putting my paper away in a hurry for tea as my two eldest Grand children were getting a music lesson from your cousin Fanny in the drawing room I hurried off to clear the table in the dining room.

There seems to be some fatality about getting this letter finished I wd write it out again because of taking wrong sheet but I am so busy & so unwell with Sciatica & other ailments you will excuse me I know. Lately I had a letter from my son George & he tells me that Gerald Hester is now working with him & that they are making 18/- per day each average & hope to do even better soon it is a crushing business that George invented for crushing cement which contains Gold, they are crushing for the public & I suppose it is pretty hard work sometimes they do some prospecting for themselves I do hope they will be rewarded by getting a good reef or some nuggets only a few weeks ago a man got a 40 oz nugget in the next hole to them. We are expecting Eva Hall to pay us a visit during Xmas vacation we are delighted to think she is really coming. I hope you will soon get this long looked for note & forgive your old Auntie. Give my love to all at home & believe me to be your loving Aunt continually praying for a blessing on you all now & ever

S L H Bracher